



# OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS MESSENGER

Issue Number 44

April 2024

## From Our Regional Minister

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
I would like to express my deep gratitude for your fraternity's generosity in the annual contribution to the regional, national, and international fraternities. Without your generosity, our OFS structure would not thrive as it is right now. Beside the financial support, I am also aware that there is much unseen generosity behind this: the time you spend to write the annual report, to be in the council, making sure that the fraternity register is up-to-date, resolving conflicts within your fraternity, and your time in supporting the fraternal life. I am sure that the list is long!

Many fraternities are aging; on average more than 60% of fraternity members are 65 and above; many have health challenges. Many of them are still active in the fraternity council or even do farming and drive for hours. How awesome is that? I also notice that one fraternity has 30 members plus 9 candidates and 12 inquirers, 25-30 members constantly attend their fraternity gatherings, they have at least 3 gatherings a month, many members are supporting the fraternity councils, and they contribute to the council with activity ideas. Some members have apostolate to help with the poor: distributing sandwiches weekly among the poor and helping Missionaries of Charity.

No, I am not here to compare different fraternities. All of you are my brothers and sisters; in my position, I would like to walk with you in this journey together. The Lord has a reason to place all of you in my path. My close friend once told me that this day has been given to me as an opportunity to love: to love God, myself, and others. You know the love I mean: the

selfless love shown by Christ, St. Francis, St. Clare, and many other Franciscan Saints. You can also put it in the context of fraternal life: I am here as a member of my fraternity to love them. How can I love my fraternity members and my fraternity council members? Love is always creative and creates growth, no matter how young you are. Blessed by God, some fruits of love from St. Francis, St. Clare, and many Franciscan saints are here with us: 3 orders that span more than 800 years! Thank you for all of your prayers. George Guimond, our National Anglophone VM is on his way to recovery and is able to be active again! Please continue to pray for one another at this time as all of us have our own challenges that can potentially take us away from our Franciscan profession.

Peace and all good,  
Lanny

## THE ROAD TO EMMAUS



*Did not our hearts burn within us as He talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us? LUKE 24:32*

## From Our Spiritual Assistant

### A call to descend in order to ascend...

Recently, while talking about Franciscan Spirituality to grade 12 of Vancouver College, it again struck me profoundly that St. Francis of Assisi gave away all earthly riches his father offered and accepted the poverty of Christ in order to attain heavenly riches. He gave up his earthly father and household to live the Holy Gospel of our Lord. He gave up his earthly ambition of becoming a knight to become Poverello of Assisi. He descended in every way and form; went down the hill of Assisi to live with the lepers and clean their wounds. Francis knew that he needed to descend only then he could ascend one day to heavenly glory.

In this season of Easter, I invite you and myself to work on at least one area of life where you need to descend in order to ascend to heavenly glory. I am sure all of us have something to work on, some areas of our life that are not in tune with God's ways. Be humble and willing to seek help if you need to. Maybe your family or fraternity can offer you that help and can be an instrument leading you to heavenly glory. Every day of our life requires us to give away whatever is a block to receiving heavenly glory.

### Lord, make me an instrument of your peace...

The ongoing war and conflicts in our wounded world speak a lot towards where the world is moving. Can you imagine what it is to live in the Holy Land now in the midst of conflicts and crises? Many people are leaving the Holy Land because of these rising tensions. Recently, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the OFM, appealed to his fellow Franciscans to stay put in the Holy Land despite rising tensions and threats to physical safety due to the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. He said choosing to stay despite increased military escalation in the region does not mean being "shut up in our convents," but rather entails "staying with the people, and then remaining as intercessors."

St. Francis of Assisi did not expect to bring peace into the world by simply withdrawing and praying for the world (which he did periodically); but, rather, by directly engaging the world where the world was. Just as the Word became incarnate and came down into the world – in all its ugliness and sin – so did

Francis get involved in the complexities and difficulties of the world. We are familiar with the story of St. Francis and the Sultan. With faith in God and Gospel, Francis crossed over the enemy line with the message of love. He shows us that through sincere dialogue conversion can take place, friendship can be achieved, and peace can be restored. Again, when attempting to negotiate peace, Francis did not hope for merely an end to the struggle and violence, but something more concrete. In every aspect of life, he was attempting to bring peace that comes from an active spiritual experience, a changed soul, the peace that does not come from the world, but from God through Jesus Christ. Francis knew that peace can only come from the intimate relationship with God, other and entire creation. So, for Francis, peace was not simply the absence of war or tension, but was a concrete experience and expression of living the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now is the time, let us not only pray the 'prayer of peace' but be the 'peace builders' wherever we live.

Br Manoj Xalxo

## From Our Regional Director of Formation Planning for the Month of Our Mother

In the *Franciscan Daily Companion* on April 16, 2024 Pope Saint Pius X writes "Among all the devotions approved by the Church, none has been favored by so many miracles as the devotion of the Most Holy Rosary. REFLECTION: The commemoration of Saint Bernadette reminds us that we are called to foster a real and profound devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Over the centuries, the Rosary has been a privileged form of devotion. As we pray the Rosary, we unite with those praying it around the world, and even with those who prayed it throughout the ages.

PRAYER: *Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us!* QUESTIONS: - What are you doing to honour Mary, the Mother of God, during the month of May? Perhaps you are visiting senior members of your fraternity and praying the Rosary with them.

**Maybe you are taking the time to remind your fraternity brothers and sisters that several Secular Franciscans meet on the first Saturday of each month to pray the Crown Rosary together on zoom.** - Are you the person who leads the Rosary before a weekend Mass in your parish church? - Do

you appreciate the 'glow in the dark' statue of Mary on your night table as a reminder that you are never alone in the dark? - Do you contemplate and/or pray the *Memorare Prayer* when you have a few minutes to spare? *Saint Francis of Assisi, you loved Mary, the Mother of God, with all your heart. Pray for us!*

DO YOU KNOW a Secular Franciscan who loves Mary and the Holy Rosary so much that he/she teaches the youngsters at the local Catholic School how to pray the Rosary or how to make a cord Rosary to give to a beloved family member like Grandma or Grandpa? This year we are blessed to have three Secular Franciscans sharing their love of Mary and the Holy Rosary in Catholic Schools in Central Alberta as they make cord Rosaries with the children. During May Cathy Bouchard, ofs is making cord Rosaries with the grade five students at Saint Gregory the Great School in Blackfalds. Jo-Anne Sell, ofs is making cord Rosaries with grade five students at Holy Trinity School in Olds and grandmas and parents are joining me to make cord Rosaries with the grade four students at Ecole Our Lady of the Rosary School in Sylvan Lake.

*Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, Pray for us!*

Catherine McNiff, ofs



## From Our National Director of Formation

안녕하세요  
annyeonghaseyo

**WELCOME** in Korean

Hello dear Brothers and Sisters in the OLOTA Region, We are looking for someone who is able to translate some of our National Formation Material into Korean. We are blessed to have a number of Korean speaking fraternities across Canada who would greatly benefit from our material. Please feel free to contact me anytime if you are able to help with this ministry. [catherinepayne279@gmail.com](mailto:catherinepayne279@gmail.com)

Ph: 519-820-4130

With sincere thanks,  
Catherine Payne, ofs  
National Director of Formation

## Save the Dates

### -VESPERS and FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY

On first Saturday of each month. **Next session:**

**May 4th @ 7pm PT/8pm MT/9pm CT**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1V0Z3EybWMraG1PPTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

### -Next FRANCISCAN VISION GLOBAL SUMMIT

**May 25<sup>th</sup> 2024** *The image of Saint Francis in the Divine Office on the Feast of the Stigmata and its significance for today.* **Speaker: Filippo Sedda**

**Registration is free.** For Info see **BROCHURE**

Link to [JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER](#)



## Links to Resources on the STIGMATA

- Four-minute video on the painting [Giotto's St Francis Receiving the Stigmata](#) by the Khan Academy of Art
- Four-minute video clip from the film *St Francis of Assisi* by Mary's Dowry Production on [Receiving the Stigmata](#).

*There will be more links each month on the Stigmata. They will also be posted on the OLOTA.org website.*

## Social Corner



St Anthony of Padua Fraternity of Richmond, BC celebrated the birthday of their Minister Dulce Da Costa on April 16, 2024.



Our Lady of the Angels Messenger, Secular Franciscan Order of Western Canada Region, April 2024  
Minister Lanny Hui, of [lanny.hui@gmail.com](mailto:lanny.hui@gmail.com) Editor Colleen Finlon, of [cmfinlon@hotmail.com](mailto:cmfinlon@hotmail.com)

